

and it was to correct the false impression that would grow out of that assertion of a fact which was not a fact, that I rose to make a personal explanation. I did not suppose the gentleman had any intention to misrepresent me, or to make any assertion which he did not regard as perfectly true. I only desired to put myself right with reference to the fact.

Mr. SANDS repeated his point of order, and asked the decision of the Chair.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair has frequently called the attention of the Convention to the necessity on the part of gentlemen of abstaining from any personal allusions to each other. It is in contravention of the rule adopted by the Convention. The Chair was upon the point of interrupting the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Abbott) at the time he referred to the remarks of the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke). But the gentleman from Baltimore city having characterized the remarks of the gentleman from Prince George's, it would now be improper to restrain the gentleman from Prince George's from ascertaining from the gentleman from Baltimore city what his motives were in so doing. The Chair stated that the gentleman from Baltimore city disclaimed any personal imputation of motives; but still he had the right to inquire for himself. With that view the Chair permitted the gentleman from Prince George's to proceed. The question came up, it will be remembered, on a motion to restrict debate; and upon that the gentleman from Baltimore city indulged in those remarks, and it would be improper for the Chair to restrain the gentleman from Prince George's from removing any impression unjustly produced by them. The Chair overrules the point of order, as not being well taken.

Mr. SANDS. Will the Chair permit me one moment?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman has a right to explain, and to discuss the point of order, if the gentleman appeals from the decision of the Chair. One half the difficulty that has arisen in this Convention, the Chair will take occasion to remark, has arisen from the constant interruptions by gentlemen interposing. If gentlemen will restrain their passions, and feelings and listen, the Chair will not permit any gentlemen here to reflect upon the motives of any other gentleman. He considers himself bound, as the organ of the Convention, to restrain gentlemen, without regard to party, if they shall attempt to do so. The practice of interrupting members in debate is very improper, and occasions nearly all the difficulty in legislative bodies.

Mr. ABBOTT. I desire simply to say that the remarks I made were only in advocacy of the amendment I had offered to the order of the gentleman from Cecil county (Mr. Scott). It became necessary for me to make some allusion to the subject which had been

so elaborately discussed yesterday, and I disclaimed at the time any intention of discourtesy to the gentleman from Prince George's.

The PRESIDENT. That was all I supposed the gentleman from Prince George's to desire.

Mr. ABBOTT. I thought I was perfectly understood; and when the gentleman's colleague suggested that he was not in his seat, I said I intended no discourtesy to him; but this was a matter I thought it necessary to urge in this body, and I think so still.

The PRESIDENT. Gentlemen have a perfect right to characterize the opinions of each other just as they may desire. They may consider them absurd, exploded, or append to them any adjective they see fit to use, provided it does not reflect on this body as a collective body, or on individual members. The Chair considers the honor of each individual member as entrusted to a certain extent to his guardianship. Still members have the reserved right to protect themselves, independent of the opinion of the Chair.

Mr. ABBOTT. I shall very cheerfully submit at all times to the dictation of the Chair, and will be much obliged to the Chair, if I transgress the rules of order, to call me to order.

Mr. SANDS. I do not wish to appeal, but I should like an opportunity to explain myself.

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman has a right to explain himself.

Mr. SANDS. The Chair seems to have entirely misunderstood the point that I raised. In the last remarks of the Chair, he has taken precisely the ground which I intended my point of order to cover, that gentlemen have a perfect right to characterize the remarks of other gentlemen as they please, provided they disclaim any personal reflection. My point was that the gentleman from Baltimore city disclaimed any personal reflection, and that the remarks of the gentleman from Prince George's were liable to be criticised.

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman gives to the President a right which the President utterly disclaimed. The President has no exclusive right to judge of the character of remarks. The President, for the purpose of satisfying the gentleman from Prince George's, announced the fact that the gentleman from Baltimore city disclaimed personal reflection. But the gentleman from Prince George's had the reserved right to inquire for himself.

Mr. SANDS. My point was that the gentleman had the right to inquire for himself, but only to inquire respecting personal allusions.

Mr. BERRY, of Baltimore county. I am opposed to the order of the gentleman from Cecil (Mr. Scott), and also to the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Abbott). It is a restriction upon the debate, and I am opposed to it, because within four sections of that which is now being consid-